

OXFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Oxford Public Schools



Home of the Pirates

Term 4 & End-of-Year Grading Guidelines 2020

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TERM 4 & END-of-YEAR GRADING GUIDELINES

Introduction

By: Dr. Kristine E. Nash, Acting Superintendent of Schools

Term 4 began on April 8th and ends with school closing on June 15th. Unlike Term 3 where the two methods of grading were co-mingled at the secondary level, numeric and Credit/No Credit, in Term 4 students at the middle and high school levels will receive a Credit/No Credit grade. However, at the elementary schools, students will continue to be graded in the current standards-based format. At the secondary level, in particular, considerations for adjustments in grading need to be part of the discussion.

As the District begins Term 4 and moves to the end of the school year, there are many questions/considerations that we needed to determine. In some instances, the questions below had already been answered or were removed from consideration as they were not as relevant to the grading discussion.

❖ **Oxford High School & Oxford Middle School**

- Will final exams be administered? (*OHS only)
- In second semester classes, how will teachers average a numeric grade with a Credit/No Credit grade? (*OHS only)
- How will GPA be calculated? (*OHS only)
- Will a student fail a second semester course? (*OHS only)
- Will students receive a Credit/No Credit in specials? (*OMS only)
- How will determinations be made regarding grades for NHS/NJHS admission?
- How will a teacher calculate the final average for a student given the fact that the grade a student receives for Term 4 will be grade Credit/No Credit and the fact that a student has been in school for approximately two-thirds of the year?
- Will teachers still give conduct/effort grades for full-year courses?
- Will we retain students this year? If so, how will we determine retention given that students will be graded with a Credit/No Credit for Term 4?
- Will a student fail a full-year course?
- How will attendance be recorded?
- How will we handle students who do not have enough credits/grades to move to the next grade If summer school is not an option for students this year?

❖ **CHAFFEE & BARTON**

- Will students receive end-of year-teacher comments?
- Will conduct and effort grade be given?
- How will attendance be recorded?
- How will teachers assess students for Term 4 given the fact that remote learning will not provide them with enough evidence to assess a student's performance on standards?
- Will we recommend retention for a student this year? If so, what additional criteria will be used?

OXFORD HIGH SCHOOL & OXFORD MIDDLE SCHOOL

Recommendations for Term 4 & End-of-Year Grading

1. Will final exams be given at the high school?
No final exams will be given this year at the high school to seniors or underclassmen. Seniors will use the exam week (week after Memorial Day) where seniors only report to school to take exams as the time to complete any outstanding makeup work for Term 4. Final exams for the remaining grades which are normally given during the last week of school in class will not be given.
2. How will second semester classes be graded at the high school? Could a student fail a second semester class?
In Term 3 students received a numeric grade which was based on their time spent in class up to school closure in mid-March. In addition, students had the opportunity to positively impact their Term 3 grade with extra credit assignments completed during remote learning. As almost 70% of Term 3 was completed in class, students were assigned a numeric grade. However, no student received a grade lower than 60 (D-), meaning that no student failed Term 3. In Term 4 students will be graded as having received Credit or No Credit for the term. A student who receives a No Credit for Term 4 and who received a minimum grade in Term 3 (D- 60-62 or D 63-66) could be at risk to fail a semester course.
3. How will GPA be calculated at the high school?
GPA for seniors only will be calculated based on Terms 1 & 2. For students in grades 9-11, GPA will be calculated on the average of Terms 1, 2 & 3 and the value-added grade for Term 4 (+5 points for receiving a "Credit" grade). Grade 8 students will have GPA calculated only if they are enrolled in high school level credit-bearing courses.
4. How will students be graded in specials at the Middle School?
Students will be graded Credit/No Credit in specials - art, music, physical education, and STEM.
5. How will determinations be made for NHS and NJHS?
At the High School grade point averages will be used from Terms 1 & 2 only as part of the determination for NHS eligibility. At the Middle School the handbook states that Grade 6 eligibility is based on Terms 1 & 2 only, so there is no impact. However, in Grade 7 the handbook policy is to use Terms 3 & 4 of Grade 6 and Terms 1 & 2 of Grade 7. The recommendation from the principal is that for next year only we use Terms 1 & 2 in Grade 7 to determine eligibility.
6. How will a final average be calculated at both schools?
All four terms will be counted in calculating a student's final average in a course. Terms 1, 2 & 3 will carry equal weight as students received a numeric grade for each term. Consideration was given as to how to weigh Term 3. However, as students were in class for approximately 70% of the term and as teachers were able to give a

numeric grade for Term 3, the determination was made to weight the term as equal to the other two terms.

Term 4 will be calculated differently. Since all of Term 4 was virtual and as a student will receive a Credit/No Credit grade instead of a numeric grade, Term 4 will be calculated as a “value-added” term. Value-added is a measurement term used in education to assess the progress that a student has made. It takes into account where a student started from and their relative progress to other students, in this case, those in the class. The manner in which “value-added” will be determined is as follows: 1. If a student receives a “Credit” grade for Term 4, the student’s final average will be impacted with the addition of a “value-added” boost of +5 additional points to the average of Terms 1, 2 or 3. An illustration is as follows:

Student A

Term 1: 80, Term 2: 75, Term 3: 82 = 79* (Avg. for Terms 1,2 & 3)

Term 4: Credit = +5 Value – Added Points)

79 + 5 = 84 (Final Average Grade for Course)

Student B

Term 1: 60, Term 2: 65, Term 3: 60 = 62* (Avg. for Terms 1,2 & 3)

Term 4: No Credit

62 (Final Average Grade for Course)

7. How will students be graded for second semester courses at the high school?

Students received a numeric grade for Term 3 and will receive a Credit/No Credit grade for Term 4. Given the fact that in Semester 3 & 4 combined, students were only in the classroom approximately 35% of the time, it would be improbable that teachers would be able to assess student performance with a numeric grade for the year. Rather, the determination is that students in Semester 2 classes will be graded with a Credit or No Credit as a final grade. Teachers will utilize a student’s Term 3 numeric grade and a student’s overall participation and performance in the class during Term 4 to arrive at a final average. To this end, a student who failed Term 3 and who receives No Credit grade for Term 4 would receive a No Credit in the course. Also, a student who performed poorly during Term 3, for example, earned a grade of 61-65 and who did not participate and complete work during Term 4 could also fail the course.

8. Will students receive conduct and effort grades?

Similar to the elementary schools, teacher will not provide conduct or effort grades for the same reasons.

9. Will students be retained this year?

Currently at the Middle School, no student is earning grades that would place him/her in jeopardy of being recommended for retention. However, one student with attendance issues may fall into that category. At the High School, students may still be retained if they do not meet the requirements for credits to be earned in order to be promoted to the next grade (30 credits Sophomore, 60 credits Junior, 95

credits Senior). In addition, in accordance with the Program of Studies section “Promotion Policy,” regardless of the number of credits earned, if students do not earn a passing grade in English and Mathematics in Grades 8-11, they will not be promoted. As students spent two-thirds of the year in class, it is likely that students who are not promoted are also students who were consistently not doing well academically in Terms 1 & 2.

10. Will a student fail a full-year class?

If a student performed poorly in all three terms and receives a “No Credit” in Term 4, that student will fail a full-year class. However, if a student receives a borderline passing grade (above 60 at HS and above 65 at MS) and receives a “Credit” grade for Term 4 (+5 points added to average of Terms 1-3), the student will pass the class for the year.

11. How will attendance be recorded?

DESE has suspended the need to report attendance for the time that the Governor closed schools. Attendance for Term 4 will not be recorded for purposes of reporting to DESE. However, individual teachers may take daily attendance.

12. What can students do if they have not earned enough credits to be promoted to the next grade?

As in previous summers, we anticipate being able to provide summer school for students to make up courses they have failed. However, this year summer school could look different given restrictions that may still be in place regarding social distancing. As such, the summer school program would have the potential to be moved to remote learning, namely students engaging in online recovery credit courses. However, adjustments could be made based on any changes to state restrictions.

CHAFFEE & BARTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Recommendations for Term 4 & End-of-Year Grading

1. Will students receive end-of-year teacher comments?
Teachers will have the option of providing end of year teacher comments.
2. Will students receive conduct and effort grades?
Teachers will not provide comments on conduct and effort for Term 4. Given the fact that students have been engaged in remote learning since mid-March, and that assessment in these two areas at this level is more often observational, elementary principals determined that it would not be prudent to provide conduct and effort grades. In addition, teachers have the ability to make a comment on one of these areas under the “Teacher Comments” section should they find this necessary.
3. Will attendance be recorded?
DESE has suspended the need to report attendance for the time that the Governor closed schools. Attendance for Term 4 will not be recorded. However, this does not preclude a teacher from continuing to take daily attendance.
4. Will we recommend retention for a student this year? If so, what additional criteria will be used?
At the early childhood level (K-1), grades have always been only one factor in the consideration of retention. The most prevalent discussions as to retention occur between the principals and staff and parents. No recommendation for retention occurs without agreement from all stakeholders that retention is in the best interest of the student. Based on the current population of student In Grades 2-4, the recommendation is not to retain any student this year.
5. Will teachers still assess students using the same performance levels for the standards?
Presently at both schools there are five performance ratings that a student may receive. One rating (X) is used at both schools to indicate that the standard was “not graded this term.” The other four rating categories differ a little but only in their vernacular. Both schools utilize a four performance level rating system ranging from the highest level of performance (excellent/advanced) to the lowest level (area of concern/warning). Chaffee uses a number code while Barton uses a letter code. Specifically, the rating categories at each school are as follows:

Chaffee (K & 1) Barton (Gr. 2 only)

**4 = Exceeds the standard
3 = Meets the standard
2 = Approaching the standard
1 = Area of concern
X = Not graded this term**

Barton – Grades 3 & 4

**A = Advanced
P = Proficient
NI = Progressing
W = Warning
X = Not graded this term**

The determination has been made that it will be difficult to measure student performance on the identified Term 4 standards using the current four rating levels given the fact that students are engaged in remote learning.

Instead, the proposal is to use a narrative reporting system for Term 4 in lieu of the current ratings of specific standards. Teachers across both buildings will develop a broad list of comments that will be provided as a narrative report to parents. Teachers will be able to select a variety of comments as feedback on student progress in Term 4. Feedback could range from statements about general performance in a subject area to level of participation in a remote learning class.